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THE PROBLEM OF JESUS

BY
GEORGE DANA BOARDMAN

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INTRODUCTION

George Dana Boardman, son of the distinguished Baptist missionary to the Burmese and Karens of the same name, stepson of Adoniram Judson, grandson of a Baptist preacher of the State of Maine, the Rev. Sylvanus Boardman, was born in Tavoy, Burma, August 18, 1828. At the age of six he was sent home, alone, to his grandparents. The long voyage, lasting nearly a year, his ill-treatment at the hands of the ship's company, and his marvelous escape from Malaysia pirates are a well-known episode of missionary history.

Young Boardman graduated at Brown University in 1852; at Newton Theological Institution in 1855; was pastor at Barnwell, South Carolina, 1855-1856; of the Second Baptist Church, Rochester, New York, 1856-1864; and of the First Baptist Church, Philadelphia, 1864-1894 (and thereafter honorary pastor). His learning, both theological and secular, was encyclopedic; his interests multifarious, and widened by much travel. He was famous for his expositions of Scripture in pulpit and prayer-meeting. "To try to unfold the Word of God" he declared to be his supreme

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life objective. His courses of public lectures in Philadelphia attracted large audiences, and he was also a lecturer at Temple University, Bucknell University, and the University of Chicago. In later years he was deeply interested in the application of the gospel of Christ to social and economic problems—being a leader in the Brotherhood of the Kingdom movement and in various peace societies—and in the furtherance of church union. The chief titles of his published literary output are: *Studies in the Creative Week*, 1877; *Studies in the Model Prayer*, 1879; *Epiphanies of the Risen Lord*, 1879; *Studies in the Mountain Instruction*, 1880; *The Divine Man from the Nativity to the Temptation*, 1887; *The Ten Commandments*, 1889; *Coronation of Love*, 1895; *The Kingdom*, 1899; *The Church*, 1901; *Ethics of the Body*, 1903.

Doctor Boardman was at one time or another an officer or a member of the board of nearly all our denominational societies, including the presidency of the Foreign Missionary Society. He was a vice-president of the Publication Society, and for many years a member of its Board. He was a trustee of the University of Pennsylvania. He received the exceptional honor, for other than a scientist, of being elected a member of the American Philosophical Society. His alma mater gave him the honorary D. D. in 1866, Pennsylvania the

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honorary LL. D. in 1899. Shortly before his death he endowed a lectureship in Christian ethics at the University of Pennsylvania, now known as the Boardman Foundation. He was married August 14, 1855, in Albany, New York, to Ella W. Covell, who survived him by several years. Their long married life was exceptionally congenial and happy. His death, or, better said, his coronation, occurred at Atlantic City, New Jersey, April 28, 1903.

The Problem of Jesus, first published in 1891, from the outset attracted wide attention as a unique example of fine English writing and forceful apologetic, and especially as a beautiful tribute to the Lord of whom its writer was such a faithful and worthy servant. For all its distinction the essay was no rhetorical *tour de force*, but a thoughtful, prayerful meditation set down in chaste paragraphs. Doctor Boardman was indeed a sort of stylistic wizard. Even in his preaching and conversation—as those of us who were privileged to listen to him can testify—it was almost uncanny how exactly the apposite word or phrase would come to him; the way in which he would pile up happy synonyms, striking antitheses and impressive climax; yet in utter innocence of smartness or preciosity. Robert Underwood Johnson, certainly a capable judge in such matters, has referred to Doctor Boardman's English style as "pure and

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fascinating." All this one finds in *The Problem of Jesus*.

Of all that he wrote and published I think that Doctor Boardman loved this little book best. He told me how happy he was in making it; how sometimes he would walk the floor of his study for half an hour rummaging his mind for a more fitting word or a happier turn of a sentence. "You must not talk of the King Emmanuel in the colloquial of the scullions' bench," he argued. Nor was he displeased when we assured him that in our opinion he had made a precious little classic of Christian literature.

It is understandable then why Doctor Boardman made testamentary provision for the circulation of this booklet after his death. (It went through three editions while he was living.) The income of the bequest has heretofore been applied to the support of one who had been a faithful servant to him and Mrs. Boardman. It now reverts to the Publication Society, and the expense of this edition of *The Problem of Jesus* is our first use of the fund, our first opportunity to carry out the sacred and eminently worth-while trust.

MITCHELL BRONK.

PHILADELPHIA, NOVEMBER, 1932.

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The Problem of Jesus is twofold. First: A philosophical problem—How will you account for him? Secondly: A practical problem—What will you do with him?

I

The Philosophical Problem: How Will You Account for Jesus of Nazareth?

JESUS THE NAZARENE IS THE MOST REMARKABLE PHENOMENON IN HUMAN HISTORY. However much men may differ about him in other respects, they all agree about him in this respect. Let us then examine this matter with a carefulness which a phenomenon so remarkable justifies.

Jesus is a phenomenon in respect to his personality.

Glance first at the mental structure of Jesus. There have been many men of genius in this world. But brilliant as these men of genius were, they were more or

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less unbalanced. On the other hand, Jesus held his manifold gifts in perfect poise. For example: Jesus was intellectual, yet not frigid; subtle, yet not casuistical; scrutinizing, yet not morbid; original, yet not oracular; aphoristic, yet not arid; judicial, yet not portentous; assertive, yet not dogmatic; piquant, yet not mordant; didactic, yet not pedagogic; luminous, yet not scintillant; parabolical, yet not nebulous; paradoxical, yet not contradictory; humorous, yet not coarse; practical, yet not pragmatical; philosophical, yet not dialectical; telescopic, yet not hazy; microscopic, yet not rabbinic; profound, yet not abysmal; idealistic, yet not quixotic; unique, yet not eccentric; in brief, a transcendent genius, yet not a transcendental prodigy. Jesus of Nazareth is time's intellectual phenomenon.

Glance now at the moral character of Jesus. There have been many noble characters in the world—glorious heroes, patriots, philanthropists, reformers, martyrs—men and women before whose names

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Christendom bows, and bows justly. It is around such transcendent characters as these, towering like mountains above the plains of common humanity, that the reverence of the ages loves to wrap the robe of a spotless purity, even as the virgin snow enwraps the distant Alpine ranges. But as the actual attempt to climb those snowy heights discloses, here and there, huge gorges and beetling precipices, so, alas, does a nearer inspection of these transcendent characters disclose many a defect and deformity which mars and sometimes almost hides the general beauty. Abraham, Moses, David, Socrates, Confucius, Cicero, Paul, Augustine, Luther, Cromwell, Washington, Lincoln, Gladstone were far from faultless, even in the eyes of men.

Only one Character in all history has endured successfully all tests of keenest scrutiny. For more than nineteen hundred years that Character has stood before Christendom, occupying the most conspicuous niche in the pantheon of this

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world's heroes. For more than nineteen hundred years scholars, skilled in all arts of searching criticism, have scrutinized every detail of that Character, as the sculptor searches for signs of flaw in the marble block he proposes to chisel. And what is the result? After nearly two millenniums of fiery criticism, the character of Jesus of Nazareth still shines as earth's purest diamond. Not but there have been and still are fierce assailants, who have pointed out here and there what they choose to style flaws. Nevertheless, even unbelief itself assigns to the Man of Nazareth the supremest post of honor among earth's heroes, crowning him King of the kingliest.

Of course, it is audacious in me to undertake a portraiture of this incomparable Character. But it is one of the elements in our problem, and therefore it must be attempted. Only the swiftest outline can be endeavored. Jesus of Nazareth was, for example: faultless, without dulness; altruistic, without indiscriminateness;

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constructive, without castle-building; dignified, without stiffness; delicate, without daintiness; enthusiastic, without fanaticism; guileless, without credulousness; chivalrous, without rashness; aggressive, without pugnacity; conciliatory, without sycophancy; prudent, without opportunism; modest, without self-depreciation; gracious, without condescension; just, without severity; lenient, without laxity; flexible, without vacillation; conservative, without obstructiveness; progressive, without precipitance; patient, without stoicism; persistent, without perverseness; decisive, without bluntness; imperative, without imperiousness; heroic, without rashness; independent, without self-insulation; self-conscious, without self-conceit; optimistic, without dreaminess; sad, without gloom; sympathetic, without sentimentality; generous, without prodigality; appreciative, without effusiveness; indignant, without bitterness; forgiving, without feebleness; sociable, without familiarity; reserved, with-

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out moroseness; conscientious, without bigotry; self-denying, without asceticism; unworldly, without un wisdom; trustful, without improvidence; virile, without fierceness; diversified, without contrariety; in a word, perfect, without unnaturalness. Whatever things are true, whatever things are honorable, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report—if there be any virtue and if there be any praise—all these and such as these are impersonated in the Nazarene.

Recall the countless tributes paid to Jesus, consciously and unconsciously, by the annual commemorations of his birth, his death, his resurrection. Christmas Day, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, the weekly Sunday itself—these are observed as holi-days (that is, Holy Days) throughout Christendom. This very word “Christendom” is itself a majestic tribute to Christ.

Note how the name of Jesus is en-

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shrined and perpetuated in the temples reared for his worship, in the sacraments of his churches, in the monograms of initials and devices and gems, in Christian art and creeds and music and periodicals and poems.

Observe the homage paid to Jesus by societies in calling themselves "Christian"; for instance, Young Men's Christian Associations, Young Women's Christian Associations, Christian Endeavor Societies, "In His Name" organizations.

Ponder especially the unintentional tributes to Jesus implied in the assaults against him—assaults marked by ignorance, by intellectualism, by virulence; for instance, the assaults of Julian, Herbert, Gibbon, Hume, Voltaire, Paine, Strauss, Mill, Ingersoll. But Jesus of Nazareth has never been so influential as at this very hour. Time has proved that Julian the apostate was no match for Matthew the publican; that Herbert the nobleman was no match for Mark the evangelist; that Gibbon the historian was no match for

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Luke the physician; that Hume the agnostic was no match for John the exile; that Voltaire the scoffer was no match for Paul the tent-maker; that Paine the deist was no match for the writer of the letter to the Hebrews; that Strauss the professor was no match for James the servant of the Lord Jesus Christ; that Mill the materialist was no match for Peter the fisherman; that Ingersoll the atheist was no match for Jude the brother of James; that Satan the destroyer is no match for Jesus the upbuilder. Do you talk about a waning Christianity? You might as well talk about a waning Deity!

Yes, Jesus was more than the Nazarene, more even than history's unique hero. Jesus was, to use his own favorite designation of himself, recurring some eighty times in the Gospels, "The Son of man." Observe: the designation is not "a son of man"; neither is it "a son of men"; neither is it "the son of men"; but it is "THE SON OF MAN." As such the designation is absolutely unique. See how the

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Son of man illustrates in himself all essential human capacities; for example, reason, imagination, conscience, courage, patience, faith, hope, love; blending in his own pure whiteness all colors of all manly virtues, all hues of womanly graces, as though he himself were Deity's own infinite, ever-blessed sunlight. In other words, Jesus is the universal *Homo*, blending in himself all races, ages, capacities, temperaments, types. See how he blends in himself the race-marks of the three sons of Noah—Shemitic reverence, Hamitic force, Japhetic culture. Jesus is the transcendent *Vir*, himself alike the radiating focus of all best impulses and the converging focus of all best achievements. Towering above all mankind, yet permeating all mankind, Jesus is mankind's archetypal, antitypal, consummate Man; the symbol of perfected human nature; the Alpha and the Omega of unfolded, full-filled humanity. The Son of man, and none but him, realizes Auguste Comte's majestic dream of the Apothe-

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osis of Humanity; the very refusal of the great Positivist to enshrine Jesus in his own pantheon being his own possibly unconscious but certainly transcendent tribute to the Man of men. Jesus of Nazareth is time's personal phenomenon.

Glance now at the prodigious personal claims of this extraordinary Character. Listen to some of his own declarations—declarations intensely egoistic, yet so natural and credible that we are neither startled by them nor offended. For example:

“Come unto *me*, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and *I* will give you rest”; “Lo, *I* am with you alway, even unto the end of the world”; “*I* am the bread of life; he that cometh to *me* shall not hunger, and he that believeth on *me* shall never thirst”; “He that eateth *my* flesh and drinketh *my* blood hath eternal life; and *I* will raise him up at the last day”; “*I* am the light of the world”; “Before Abraham was born, *I* am”; “Verily, verily, *I* say unto you, *I* am the

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door of the sheep; all that came before *me* are thieves and robbers"; "*I* and the Father are one"; "*I* am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth on *me*, though he die, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on *me* shall never die"; "*I* am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one cometh to the Father but through *me*"; "Because *I* live, ye shall live also"; "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; so neither can ye, except ye abide in *me*; for apart from *me* ye can do nothing"; "*I* am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end," etc.

Thus from first to last it is a very King who speaks, conjugating all life in the active voice, the imperative mood, the present tense, the personal pronoun of the first person, the singular number. If this is not sovereignty, will you tell me what you mean by sovereignty? In fine, Jesus the Nazarene is time's phenomenal personality.

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Again, Jesus is a phenomenon in respect to his religion.

The religion of Jesus is phenomenal; first, in respect to its matter. That matter is not an outward matter of ordinances—of meats and drinks; of fast-days and feast-days; of penances and pilgrimages; of rituals and rosaries; of canonicals and theologies. That matter is an inward matter of character—of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Recall Christ's doctrines; for example, his doctrine of God: God's spirituality, supremacy, righteousness, love, fatherhood. Recall Christ's doctrine of man: man's condition as fallen, defiled, lost; man's possibility of being cleansed, transfigured, saved; man's duty of ministering, glorifying, becoming perfect. Recall Christ's doctrine of himself: his divine apostleship, interpreting, recreating. Recall Christ's doctrine of discipleship: his requirement of childlikeness, service, fruitage; his twofold test of loving the Lord our God with all our hearts, and loving

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our neighbors as ourselves; in one word, his doctrine of character. Recall Christ's doctrine of the church: its spirituality, altruism, unity; its duty of loving, non-resisting, teaching, helping, upbuilding. Recall Christ's doctrine of last things: his doctrine of resurrection, judgment, heaven, hell, palingenesis. In short, recall Christ's mighty doctrine of the kingdom of heaven, or God's reign in man's soul.

One of the best tests of a religion is the character of the heaven it promises its followers. Compare then, or rather contrast, Christ's heaven of Perfected Character with the heavens of other religions; for example, the heaven of the Greek Elysium, the Buddhistic Nirvana, the Scandinavian Valhalla, the Moslem Paradise, the Zoroastrian Garo Demana, the Indian Hunting-ground, even the materialist's Arcadia of Perfected Environment. Their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges.

Again, the religion of Jesus is phe-

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nomenal in respect to its manner. That manner was not by sword, not by legislation, not by gold, not by lore, not by ritual, not even by creed (that is, theology as a philosophic system). But that manner was by character, by living, by teaching, by self-denying, by healing, by upbuilding; most of all, by dying. Jesus on his cross is the magnet of mankind. Napoleon Bonaparte was not a good man—far from it. But he was a great man, at least according to this world's standard of greatness. It is this intellectual greatness, coupled with his own intense egotism, which makes his alleged tribute at St. Helena to the supremacy of Jesus' empire so striking:

“Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemagne, and myself founded great empires; but upon what did the creations of our genius depend? Upon force. Jesus alone founded his empire upon love, and to this very day millions would die for him” (*Bertrand's Memoirs*).

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Now it is this spirituality of Christ's religion, alike in respect to matter and to manner, which makes Christ himself the inhabitant of all lands, the contemporary of all ages, the exemplar of all ideals.

Glance for a moment at the universality of Christ's religion. All other religions are, comparatively speaking, more or less topographical. For example: there is the Institute religion of Sinai; the Priest religion of Egypt; the Hero religion of Greece; the Empire religion of Rome; the Brahma religion of India; the Buddha religion of Ceylon; the Valhalla religion of Scandinavia; the Islam religion of Arabia; the Spirit religion of our aboriginal America. But Christianity is the religion of mankind. Baal was Phœnician; Osiris was Egyptian; Apollo was Grecian; Mars was Roman; Zoroaster was Persian; Confucius was Chinese; Gautama was Indian; Odin was Norse; Mohammed was Arabian. But Jesus is the Son of man. And therefore his religion is the religion of the sons of

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men; equally suited to black and white, mountaineers and lowlanders, landmen and seamen, philosophers and catechumens, patriarchs and children. See how Jesus absorbs and assimilates into his own perfect religion all that is good in other religions: the symbolism of Judea, the aspiration of Egypt, the estheticism of Greece, the loyalty of Rome, the hopefulness of Persia, the conservatism of China, the mysticism of India, the enthusiasm of Arabia, the energy of Teutonia, the versatilities of Christendom. Like the great sea, his religion keeps flowingly conterminous with the ever-changing shore-line of every continent, every island, every promontory, every estuary. And this because he is the Son of man, in whom there is and can be neither Jew or non-Jew, neither Greek nor Scythian, neither Asiatic nor American, neither male nor female; but all are one in him, and he is all in all.

Again, glance at the immortality of Christ's religion. Other religions, so far

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as we can see, have had their day. The religions of Assyria, Egypt, Greece, Rome, Scandinavia have gone. The civilized world has long since outgrown the Koran of Mohammed, the Apothegms of Seneca, the Zend-Avesta of Zoroaster, the Analects of Confucius, the Tripitakas of Buddha, the Vedas of Brahma, even many of the Institutes of Moses. But the civilized world has not outgrown, hardly even approximated, the Teachings of Jesus; we still call many of them, for instance, his doctrine of non-resistance, Utopian. True, the vast majority of mankind still clings to ancestral forms of religion; for example, Fetichism, Animism, Brahminism, Zoroastrianism, Confucianism, Buddhism, etc. But little inspiration do these religions give to the living, little comfort to the dying, little grasp on the hereafter. Their gaze is backward rather than forward; deathward rather than lifeward. For example, the followers of Buddha claim that Nirvana—that state of existence so nebulous it cannot be affirmed

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whether it means simple unconsciousness or total extinction—is the supremest goal of aspiration; and that even Buddha himself is no longer, if he ever was, a self-conscious person, but has himself attained Buddhahood or Nirvana. On the other hand, the followers of Jesus believe that though he was crucified and buried, he has burst the bars of death and is alive forevermore, sitting on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, from henceforth expecting till he make his foes his footstool. Believing that they are permitted to hold personal communion with this risen, immortal, triumphant Nazarene, his followers are ever feeling the inspiration of his life-giving touch, and are therefore ever waking to broader thoughts and diviner catholicities. And so the religion of Jesus the Nazarene is as everlasting as it is universal.

Thus the religion of Jesus the Galilean, alike in its matter, in its manner, in its universality, in its immortality, is a religion absolutely phenomenal.

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Once more, Jesus is a phenomenon in respect to his influence.

Observe, first, his influence over *individuals*. Out of untold myriads who have felt his sway, more or less directly, I can of course mention but a few, and these few only as typical examples, confining myself to those who have departed this life. Not that all those whom I shall mention were what we call "Christians"; nevertheless, Jesus manifestly influenced them either in their character or in their work; he stood among them, though they knew him not.

See, first of all, how Jesus influenced his own *contemporaries*; for instance, his apostles, his evangelists, his ministering women, Nicodemus of Jerusalem, the woman of Samaria, the centurion of Capernaum, the penitent woman at Simon's feast, Zaccheus of Jericho, the Greek proselytes, the dying robber, Joseph of Arimathea, Saul of Tarsus. See how Jesus influenced even those who were not his followers; as when sacrilegious trad-

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ers fled before him, Roman soldiers fell prostrate at sight of him, heathen Pilate tried to release him, pagan centurion confessed his divinity, conscious-smitten Sanhedrin bribed Roman sentry. Even the demons felt his power and trembled.

See how Jesus has been influencing *men and women* ever since. In mentioning their names, let me classify them by their vocations, following the alphabetic order.

See, for example, how Jesus has influenced *apologists* (not apologizers for Jesus, but defenders of Christianity); for instance, such ancient apologists as Justin of Shechem, Athenagoras of Athens, Tertullian of Carthage, Lactantius of Nicomedia; such modern apologists as Butler of Durham, Boyle of Cork, Bampton of Salisbury, Mansel of Saint Paul's, Hopkins of Williams, Fairbairn of Mansfield.



See how Jesus has influenced *artists*; for instance, such architects as the de-

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signers of the abbeys of Westminster, Fountains, Tintern, Glastonbury, Caen, etc., and the cathedrals of Amiens, Canterbury, Chartres, Cologne, Durham, Ely, Exeter, Florence, Gloucester, Lincoln, Notre Dame, Peterborough, Pisa, Rheims, Rouen, Salisbury, Saint Paul's, Saint Peter's, Strassburg, Winchester, Worcester, York, etc.; such musicians as Ambrose, Gregory, Luther, Tallis, Palestrina, Purcell, Bach, Beethoven, Handel, Haydn, Mendelssohn, Spohr, Gounod, Croft, Dykes, Barnby, Mason, Guillamant, etc.; such painters as Cimabue, Giotto, Masaccio, Angelico, Bellini, Bartolommeo, Correggio, Holbein, Titian, Tintoretto, Domenichino, Guido, Rembrandt, Murillo, West, Blake, Allston, Delaroche, Scheffer, Overbeck, Millet, Doré, Bida, Hunt, Tissot; such engravers as Dürer, Müller, Longhi, Morghen, etc.; such sculptors as Saint Gaudens, Pisano, Ghiberti, Donatello, Vischer, Thorwaldsen, etc.; such all-comprehending artists (architectural, musical, pictorial, sculptural) as Leo-

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nardo, Michelangelo, Raphael, etc., to say nothing of such writers on sacred art as Anna Jameson and John Ruskin.



See how Jesus has influenced *biblicists*; for instance, such an archeologist as Joseph Bingham; such commentators as Origen the Greek, Augustine the Latin, Calvin the Frenchman, Grotius the Dutchman, Godet the Swiss, Meyer the German, Lightfoot the Englishman, Hackett the American; such a cyclopedist as John Kitto of Plymouth; such expositors as Davidson, Dods; such geographers as Palmer, Thomson, Tristram; such lexicographers as Trench and Thayer; such textuaries ("critics" if you prefer) as Abbot, Hort, Westcott; such translators of the Bible as Jerome (Latin), Wycliffe (English), Luther (German), Segond (French), Eliot (Indian); such writers of analyses, concordances, introductions, etc., as Alexander Cruden, Thomas Hartwell

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Horne, Robert Young; in *sum*, such a many-sided biblicist (archeologist, explorer, harmonist, diagrapher, etc.) as Edward Robinson.



See how Jesus has influenced *biographers* (I mean only those who have written more or less complete memoirs of him); for instance, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John; Andrews, Baumgarten, Beecher, Bonaventura, Caspari, Crosby, De Pressensé, Dupanloup, Ebrard, Edersheim, Ellicott, Ewald, Farrar, Fleetwood, Geike, Hanna, Hase, Herder, Keim, Klopstock, Lange, Mercier, Monod, Neander, Plumptre, Schaff, Seely, Sepp, Taylor, Weiss, Wittenichen, etc.; to say nothing of such harmonists (chronological arrangers of the gospel biographies) as Tatian, Greswell, Lightfoot, Robinson, Strong, etc. Even Strauss and Renan, in their *Lives of Jesus*, do him the homage of their elaborate doubts.



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See how Jesus has influenced *colonists*; for instance, Robinson of Leyden, Bradford of Massachusetts, Williams of Rhode Island, Penn of Pennsylvania, Calvert of Maryland, Oglethorpe of Georgia.



See how Jesus has influenced *educators*; for instance, Alcuin of York, Ascham of London, Sturm of Strassburg, Comenius of Moravia, Raikes of Gloucester, Pestalozzi of Zurich, Bell of St. Andrews, Lancaster of London, Arnold of Rugby, Mary Lyon of Mount Holyoke, Froebel of Oberweissbach, Hopkins of Williams, Wayland of Providence, the Gallaudets of Washington, William Rayney Harper of Chicago, Henry Clay Trumbull of Hartford, Horace Howard Furness of Philadelphia, Alice Freeman Palmer of Wellesley, Daniel Coit Gilman of Baltimore, to say nothing of the many Christian founders of various kinds of institutions (academic, philanthropic, reformatory, etc.),

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or of the multitudes of Christian teachers in schools of all sorts, Sunday and week-day.



See how Jesus has influenced *ethicists*; for instance, Joseph Butler, Frederick Denison Maurice, William Whewell, Francis Wayland, Mark Hopkins.



See how Jesus has influenced *heroes*; for instance, Paul of the Apostolic Church, Godfrey of Bouillon, Tancred of Galilee, Robert the Bruce, Joan of Arc, Bayard the chevalier, Columbus of Genoa, Raleigh of London, Sir Philip Sidney of Penshurst, Gustavus of Sweden, Havelock of Lucknow, Livingstone of Chitambo, Gordon of Khartum; to say nothing of the countless ungazetted heroes and heroines who have for Jesus' sake endured every form of trial in the home, the shop, the mill.



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See how Jesus has influenced *historians* (to mention only ecclesiastical); for instance, Bede, Mosheim, Gieseler, Neander, Ranke, Hagenbach, Bunsen, Burnett, Milman, de Montalembert, Merle d'Aubigne, Schaff, Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, Merivale, George Parke Fisher.



See how Jesus has influenced *hymnists*; for instance, such Greek hymnists as Anatolius of Constantinople (“Ζοφεράς τριχυμίας”), John of Damascus (“Ἀναστάσεως ἡμέρα”), Stephen of Sabas (“Κοπόν τε καὶ κόματον”), etc.; such Latin hymnists as Bernard of Clairvaux (“Jesu, dulcis memoria”), Bernard of Cluny (“Urbs Syon aurea”), Thomas of Celano (“Dies iræ, dies illa”), etc.; such German hymnists as Martin Luther (“Ein’ feste Burg ist unser Gott”), Paul Gerhardt (“O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden”), Philip Nicolai (“Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme”), Georg Neumark (“Wer nur

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den lieben Gott lässt walten’’), etc.; such translators of hymns as Edward Caswall, John M. Neale, Catharine Winkworth, etc.; such English hymnists as Sarah F. Adams (‘‘Nearer, my God, to thee’’), Joseph Addison (‘‘The spacious firmament on high’’), Horatius Bonar (‘‘I heard the voice of Jesus say’’), Sir John Bowring (‘‘In the cross of Christ I glory’’), Philip Doddridge (‘‘Jesus, I love thy charming name’’), Charlotte Elliott (‘‘Just as I am, without one plea’’), Frederick W. Faber, (‘‘There’s a wideness in God’s mercy’’), Reginald Heber (‘‘From Greenland’s icy mountains’’), Thomas Ken (‘‘Glory to Thee, my God, this night’’), Henry F. Lyte (‘‘Abide with me, fast falls the eventide’’), John Henry Newman (‘‘Lead, kindly light’’), Edward Perronet (‘‘All hail the power of Jesus’ name’’), Robert Robinson (‘‘Come, thou Fount of every blessing’’), Anne Steele (‘‘Father! whate’er of earthly bliss’’), Augustus Toplady (‘‘Rock of Ages, cleft for me’’), Isaac Watts (‘‘When I survey

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the wondrous cross”), Charles Wesley (“Jesus, lover of my soul”), etc.; such American hymnists as Phœbe H. Brown (“I love to steal awhile away”), Phœbe Cary (“One sweetly solemn thought”), Arthur C. Coxe (“Oh, where are kings and empires now?”), George Duffield (“Stand up! stand up! for Jesus”), Timothy Dwight (“I love Thy kingdom, Lord”), Edward Hopper (“Jesus, Saviour, pilot me”), John Leland (“The day is past and gone”), Ray Palmer (“My faith looks up to thee”), Mary A. Lathbury (“Break Thou the bread of life”), Edmund H. Sears (“It came upon the midnight clear”), Samuel F. Smith (“My country, ’tis of thee”), John Greenleaf Whittier (“I may not climb the heavenly steeps”), etc.; to say nothing of converted hymnists, for instance, Krishna Pal (“O thou, my soul, forget no more”), etc. Jesus is the real motif, conscious or unconscious, of all true poetry and song.



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See how Jesus has influenced *lawyers*; for instance, Selden the scholar, Hale the jurist, Blackstone the commentator, Mansfield the statesman, Marshall the constitutionalist, Jay the philanthropist, Kent the chancellor, Webster the orator, Maine the antiquarian nationalist, Harlan the judicious, Maartens the pacific.



See how Jesus has influenced *linguists* (to speak only of translators of the Bible); for instance, Eli Smith into Arabic, William Goodell into Armeno-Turkish, William Carey into Bengali, Robert Morrison into Chinese, Adoniram Judson into Burmese, Henry Martyn into Persian, John Eliot into Indian; to say nothing of the multitudes of missionaries who have translated Scriptures into hundreds of heathen tongues and dialects, in many cases even inventing alphabets, thus founding entirely new literatures. Nor should I omit to mention in this con-

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nection the name of that accomplished Christian linguist, Max Müller.



See how Jesus has influenced *martyrs*; for instance, Stephen of Jerusalem, Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp of Smyrna, Irenæus of Lyons, Perpetua and Felicitas of Carthage, Sebastian of Narbonne, Albanus of Verulam, Boniface of Friesland, Bruno of Brauenburg, Huss and Jerome of Prague, Savonarola of Florence, Latimer and Ridley of Oxford, Tyndale of Vilvorde, Rogers of Smithfield, Margaret of Wigtonshire, the Gordons of Erromanga, Hannington of Uganda, Pitkin of Paoting-fu, the Stewarts of Ku Cheng, etc.; to say nothing of the anonymous thousands and probably millions who have fallen by organized persecutions, as under the Roman emperors, among the Waldenses of the Alps, the Lollards of England, the Huguenots of France, the early converts in many mission fields, or of the

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countless saints who have bravely suffered practical martyrdom in daily life in their own obscure homes.



See how Jesus has influenced *missionaries*; for instance, Ansgar the apostle of the Scandinavians, Augustine the apostle of the English, Boardman the apostle of the Karens, Boniface the apostle of the Germans, Carey the apostle of the Hindus, Columba the apostle of the Caledonians, Cyril and his brother Methodius the apostles of the Slavs, Denis the apostle of the Gauls, Egede the apostle of the Eskimos, Eliot the apostle of the Indians, Frumentius the apostle of the Abyssinians, Gregory the apostle of the Armenians, Jewett the apostle of the Telugus, Judson the apostle of the Burmans, Mackay the apostle of the Ugandas, M'All the apostle of the French, Moffat the apostle of the Bechuanas, Morrison the apostle of the Chinese, John G. Paton

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the apostle of the New Hebrides, Patrick the apostle of the Irish, Paul the apostle of the Gentiles, Swartz the apostle of the Tamils, Ulfilas the apostle of the Goths, Willibrord the apostle of the Frisians, Xavier the apostle of the Japanese, Father Damien the apostle to the lepers, and Frederick Passy the apostle of Universal Peace.



See how Jesus has influenced *mystics*; for instance, Johannes Tauler, Thomas à Kempis, Jacob Böhme, Miguel de Molinos, Madame Guyon, Archbishop Fénelon.



See how Jesus has influenced *novelists*; for instance, Sir Walter Scott, George Borrow, Charles Dickens, Georg Ebers, Victor Hugo, Charles Kingsley, Charles Reade, Robert Louis Stevenson, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Leo Tolstoy, Lew Wallace, George Macdonald.



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See how Jesus has influenced *philanthropists*; for instance, Samuel Chapman Armstrong, Clara Barton, Henry Berg, Thomas John Bernardo, William Booth, Charles Loring Brace, Baroness Burdett-Coutts, the Buxtons, Mary Carpenter, George William Childs, Thomas Clarkson, Anthony Ashley Cooper (Lord Shaftesbury), Dorothea Lynde Dix, Theodor Fliedner, Hermann Francke, Elizabeth Gurney Fry, Joseph John Gurney, Thomas Guthrie, Octavia Hill, John Howard, Samuel Gridley Howe, George Müller, Florence Nightingale, Jean Frederick Oberlin, Vincent de Paul, George Peabody, Wendell Phillips, John D. Rockefeller, Granville Sharp, William Wilberforce; to say nothing of the many Christian founders of hospitals, asylums, orphanages, institutes, schools (academies, colleges, seminaries), settlements, etc.



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See how Jesus has influenced *philosophers*; for instance, Bacon of Oxford, Bacon of Verulam, Pascal of Port Royal, Locke of Wrington, Cudworth of Cambridge, Berkeley of Cloyne, Leibnitz of Leipsic, Clarke of Norwich, Reid of Glasgow, Kant of Königsberg, Schleiermacher of Berlin, Coleridge of Highgate, Hamilton of Edinburgh, Cousin of Paris, Whewell of Cambridge, Lotze of Bautzen, McCosh of Princeton, William James of Harvard.



See how Jesus has influenced *physicians*; for instance, Luke the Beloved, Sir Thomas Browne, Hermann Boerhaave, Albrecht von Haller, Benjamin Rush, John Abercrombie, Sir Henry Holland, Sir Andrew Clarke, Sir James Y. Simpson, D. Hayes Agnew, William W. Keen, Benjamin W. Richardson, Sir Joseph Lister, Nicholas Senn.



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See how Jesus has influenced *poets*; for instance, Dante Aligheri, Geoffrey Chaucer, Torquato Tasso, Edmund Spenser, William Shakespeare, George Herbert, Francis Quarles, John Milton, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William Wordsworth, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Robert Browning, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, William Cullen Bryant, James Russell Lowell, Alfred Tennyson, John Greenleaf Whittier, Sir Edwin Arnold.



See how Jesus has influenced *preachers*; for instance, John the golden-mouthed, Bernard the enthusiastic, Savonarola the reformer, Tauler the mystical, Luther the heroic, Calvin the intellectual, Knox the dauntless, Hooker the judicious, Taylor the exuberant, Baxter the suave, Bunyan the allegorical, Edwards the profound, Fénelon the devout, Massillon the oratorical, Whitefield the impassioned, Wesley the zealous, Hall the eloquent, Evans the dramatic, Schlei-

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ermacher the many-sided, Channing the philanthropic, Irving the eccentric, Finney the searching, Lacordaire the intense, Newman the patristic, Robertson the chivalric, Simpson the spiritual, Bushnell the suggestive, Beecher the progressive, Spurgeon the conservative, Phillips Brooks the manly, Martineau the philosophical, Moody the sensible, Parker the courageous, Hale the eclectic, John Hall the consecrated, Cuyler the sympathetic, Henry C. Potter the ecclesiastic statesman.



See how Jesus has influenced *publicists*; for instance, Grotius the jurist, Puffendorf the historian, Wheaton the diplomatist, Lieber the scholar, Woolsey the educator, Bigelow the sage.



See how Jesus has influenced *reformers*; for instance, such ecclesiastical re-

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formers as Hildebrand of Italy, Wycliffe of England, Huss of Bohemia, Luther of Germany, Zwingli of Switzerland, Groot of Holland, Farel of France, Knox of Scotland, Hooper the Puritan, Fox the Quaker, Wesley the Methodist, Zinzendorf the Moravian, Döllinger the old Catholic; such political reformers as Arnold of Brescia, Cobden of London, Curtis of New York; such sociological reformers as Louis Blanc, Thomas Chalmers, Frederick D. Maurice, Charles Kingsley, Cardinal Manning, Walter Rauschenbusch; such temperance reformers as Beecher of Connecticut, Mathew of Ireland, Gough of Massachusetts, Dow of Maine, Frances Willard of Illinois.



See how Jesus has influenced *scientists* (you tell me that the academy is skeptical, let me then appeal both to numbers and to weight); see, for instance, how Jesus has influenced such anatomists as

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William Harvey, Sir Charles Bell; such an anthropologist as James Cowles Prichard; such astronomers as Nicholas Copernicus, Johann Kepler, Galileo Galilei, Jeremiah Horrocks, Simon Newcomb, Isaac Newton, the Herschels; such botanists as Asa Gray, Sir Joseph Hooker; such chemists as John Dalton, Justus Liebig; such geologists as William Buckland, William Daniel Conybeare, James Dwight Dana, George J. Romanes, Edward Hitchcock, F. V. Hayden, Hugh Miller; such an inventor as Samuel Finley Breese Morse; such mathematicians as Isaac Barrow, Thomas Bradwardine, Leonard Euler, the Gregories, Thomas Hill, Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibnitz, John Napier, Blaise Pascal, Benjamin Pierce, Mary Somerville, Emanuel Swedenborg, Matthew Young; such naturalists as Louis Agassiz, the Le Contes, George Cuvier, Henry Drummond, Henry C. McCook, St. George Mivart; such physicists as Roger Bacon, David Brewster, Robert Boyle, Michael Faraday, Joseph Henry,

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Arnold Henry Guyot, Ebenezer Kinnersley, Joseph Leidy, James Clerk-Maxwell, the Sillimans, Alfred Wallace, Sir Francis Galton, Lord Kelvin (Sir William Thomson).



See how Jesus has influenced *statesmen*; for instance, Coligny the hero, William the Silent, Mornay the Huguenot, Cromwell the protector, Chatham the commoner, Burke the thinker, Washington the patriot, Peel the reformer, Lincoln the martyr, Calhoun the reasoner, Bright the orator, Gladstone the seer, Victoria the queen, Kelman Tisza the patriot, Lord Salisbury the profound, Sir John McKenzie the constructor, John Hay the conciliator.



See how Jesus has influenced *theologians*; for instance, Paul the forensic, Origen the exegetical, Athanasius the Christological, Gregory the profound,

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Hilary the acute, Augustine the comprehensive, Anselm the scholastic, Bernard the mellifluous, Bonaventura the seraphic, Aquinas the angelic, Scotus the subtle, Luther the versatile, Melancthon the gentle, Calvin the systematic, Butler the apologetic, Edwards the metaphysical, Swedenborg the apocalyptic, Rothe the harmonious, Schleiermacher the masterly, Ritschl the subjective, William Newton Clarke the conservative-progressive, George Matheson the blind seer.



See how Jesus has influenced *writers*; they are as countless "as the autumnal leaves that strew the brooks in Vallombrosa." Let me mention but one name, his genius shall represent them all—Alfred Tennyson.



See how Jesus has influenced even *skeptics* themselves. I might make many cita-

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tions; let the following from John Stuart Mill stand as a sample:

“About the life and sayings of Jesus there is a stamp of personal originality combined with profundity of insight which, if we abandon the idle expectations of finding scientific precision where something very different was aimed at, must place the prophet of Nazareth, even in the estimation of those who have no belief in his inspiration, in the very first rank of the men of sublime genius of whom our species can boast. When this preeminent genius is combined with the qualities of probably the greatest moral reformer and martyr to that mission who ever existed upon earth, religion cannot be said to have made a bad choice in pitching on this man as the ideal representative and guide of humanity; nor even now would it be easy, even for an unbeliever, to find a better translation of the rule of virtue from the abstract into the concrete than the endeavor so to live that

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Christ would approve our life." ("Es-says on Religion," p. 254.)



See how Jesus is *still* influencing men and women to this very day, still transfiguring into his own likeness Jews and non-Jews, savages and sages, profligates and Pharisees. In fact, there has never been an age in the Christian era when Jesus, practically speaking, influenced so many persons, or influenced them so profoundly, as in this century of his grace. For it must be admitted that in addition to the millions who openly confess him there are all through Christendom unknown multitudes of latent confessors who, repelled by present ecclesiastical tests, have never joined any earthly church, but who, if the crisis should demand, would boldly come forth, not indeed to entomb him, but to enthrone him.



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Hitherto I have spoken of the personal influence of Jesus over individuals. Let me now speak of the general influence of Jesus over *society at large*. See, for instance, how it is Jesus himself who, in virtue of his own personality and character, is making the difference between Christendom and heathendom. See how the spirit of Jesus is permeating, like a healing elixir, the disordered framework of society; opening its clogged veins, expelling its morbid humors, touching its springs of health, restoring it to the image of God. See how under his influence, or the sense of his constraining love, Christian missionaries are giving to pagans the boons of liberty, industries, property, peace, education, chastity, temperance, virtues, amenities, home. See how his influence is reconstructing human society; founding missions, asylums, hospitals, orphanages, schools, universities, institutes for heart and mind and body; ameliorating the condition of animals; exalting ideals; transfiguring childhood; up-

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lifting woman; ennobling jurisprudence; establishing and maintaining rights of labor, of property, of person, of name, of conscience, of manhood; rearing courts of arbitration—personal, corporational, national, international; exalting the individual by making him feel that he is a corporate member of human society; exalting human society by making its members feel that they are members one of another; equipoising mankind into one corporate unity; in brief, ushering in the kingdom of God.

See how Jesus has influenced *chronology* itself. Why is it, O Christian, that you do not observe the Sinaitic Sabbath by worshiping in the synagogue on Saturday? It is because you believe that Jesus rose from the dead on Sunday, and you revere him so much that you prefer his resurrection day as your Sabbath. How, O skeptic, do you date your letters? It may be that on last Christmas Day you wrote one of special importance. In dating it, why did you not reckon from the

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Greek Olympiad? from Rome's foundation? from Mohammed's flight? from Buddha's birth? from Comte's calendar? Why did you date it December 25, 1896? Because, according to the common chronology, Jesus of Bethlehem was born one thousand eight hundred and ninety-six years ago; this is why atheists and believers alike say, *Anno Domini*—IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD. Every almanac in Christendom is a tribute to Jesus.

See how Jesus has concentrated the commonest things; transfiguring water into baptism, eating and drinking into Holy Supper, society into church, cross into throne, etc.

In *sum*, see how Jesus is reorganizing human chaos, reversing human instincts, revolutionizing human tendencies, coordinating human faculties, transfiguring human sensibilities, marshaling human powers, disclosing human potentialities, celestializing human character, uprearing the temple of the new mankind, transforming earth's Babylons into heaven's Jerusalem.

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The Nazarene Teacher is himself the universal seminary, from whom mankind is evermore learning whatsoever things are true in theology, in philosophy, in science, in history, in poetry, in art, in ethics, in religion. The babe of Bethlehem is the contemporary of all times; the Man of Calvary is the inhabitant of all lands. In short, Jesus the Christ is the watershed of human history.

Thus Jesus' personality, Jesus' religion, Jesus' influence is time's overshadowing phenomenon.

And so emerges our philosophical problem:

HOW WILL YOU ACCOUNT FOR THIS UNPARALLELED PHENOMENON — JESUS THE NAZARENE?

It is a fair question to ask. A phenomenon so stupendous demands explanation. Among the axioms of reasoning are these: "From nothing nothing comes"; "Every effect must have a cause"; "Every effect must have an adequate cause," etc. Here

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is a colossal effect; what caused it? We are living in an age of scientific inquiry, inductive sciences, philosophical generalizations. I have gathered into this little book a vast mass of material, mental and moral; some of it labeled, much of it only suggested. Gathering typical samples from almost every variety of best human thought, emotion, activity, character, I have shown that Jesus of Nazareth canopies all these varieties of best human achievements and possibilities,—even as God's own sky canopies all varieties of earth's phenomena—lands, seas, forests, mountains, structures, possibilities. And now my question is: How will you account for this unparalleled phenomenon? It is a question alike momentous, philosophical, scientific, pertinent.

How will you account for the personality of Jesus? Recall the age in which he lived—an age of Jewish traditionalism, conceit, bigotry; an age of Cæsarean imperialism, selfishness, brutality, atheism. Yet, despite all this, Jesus of Nazareth is

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earth's solitary ideal, time's transcendent miracle. Instead of Christ's character having been the product of his age, that character was an absolute anachronism. Instead of Christ's personality having been an evolution, that personality was a cataclysm of graciousness, as though himself had come down from heaven without biographical father or mother, without historic beginning of days or prophetic end of time. How then will you account for this unique break in the law of heredity, this tremendous exception to the law of environment? You can account for Plato, he sat at the feet of Socrates. You can account for Cicero, he was trained in the statutes of the Twelve Tables. You can account for Newton, he pondered in the cloisters of Cambridge. But how will you account for Jesus, who never argued with Socrates by whispering Ilissus, or strode with Cicero by golden Tiber, or meditated with Newton by rippling Cam? How happens it that Jerusalem with her temple, Egypt with her

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Heliopolis, Athens with her Academy, Rome with her Forum, France with her Sorbonne, Germany with her Heidelberg, England with her Oxford, America with her Harvard—how happens it that these, and all such as these, have never produced the peer,—at best only dim hints of the Nazarene? How then will you account for the personality of Jesus? It is a fair question to ask: Whose son is he?

Again, how will you account for the religion of Jesus? Recall again his environment—his dwarfing surroundings, of rabbinism, traditionalism, trivialities. Yet, despite that disastrous environment, this obscure Galilean—this young, unloved, despised, crucified carpenter—founded a religion so seminal and prophetic that even now, after nearly two millenniums, there are a good many people who still call it utopian—a religion supremely fresh, pure, lofty, profound, catholic, controlling, immortal. How then will you account for this most remarkable moral phenomenon—the religion of Jesus

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Christ? Whose son is the Founder of Christianity?

Once more, how will you account for the influence of Jesus? Recall his boundless personal sway over men. Recall the tremendous hold he has had on mankind, and never so tremendous as today. Recall the sweeping victories of the early church, and this in spite of dreadful imperial persecutions; the homage implied in the simple initials, B. C. and A. D.; the many and enormous differences between Christendom and pagandom; the wonderful transformations of personal character; the mysterious help that often comes to his followers in time of trouble; the readiness with which, were it needful, millions would die for him. How then will you account for this influence of Jesus—an influence so personal, so continuous, so intense, so all-dominating? Again I declare, it is a fair question to ask: Whose son is Jesus?

Here then is our philosophical problem: how will you account for this most amaz-

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ing phenomenon, JESUS CHRIST; a phenomenon absolutely unparalleled in human space and time? Once more I assert, it is a fair question to ask: Whose son is this Jesus Christ? We all admit that he was David's son; how is it that, as history proves, he is also mankind's Lord?



And so we pass from the philosophical problem, How will you account for Jesus of Nazareth? to

II

The Practical Problem: What Will You Do With this Jesus?

First, *it is a momentous question*. Recall his stupendous claims. He declared that he was a teacher sent from God; he taught that he is the sole deliverer of mankind; he claims that he is still alive, and that from his throne in the heavens he demands earth's absolute allegiance; he an-

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nounces that he is to be the final judge of mankind. These are tremendous claims. Hence the question, What will you do with him? is a tremendous question. If he is to be believed, our treatment of him is decisive of our own destinies. What then will you do with Jesus of Nazareth?

Again, *it is an executive question*. It is not a question of theory, it is a question of practice; not a question of creed, but a question of life. What then will you do with Jesus of Nazareth?

Again, *it is a personal question*. Practically speaking, you cannot separate Christianity from Christ. If there is any Christianity, it is because there is a Christ. And this Christ demands a personal coronation at our hands. Neutrality here is impossible. Neutrality? neutrality is itself hostility. What then will you do with Jesus of Nazareth?

Once more, *it is a pressing question*. Recall Pilate's dilemma in his own Prætorium, "What shall I do to Jesus who is called Christ?" But Pilate was not the

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only man who has been summoned to ask this tremendous question. There is a profound sense in which it is awfully true that Jesus of Nazareth is still on our hands, still awaiting our decision concerning him, whether to deny him or to confess him. Pilate's question is an immortal question, which you and I, not less than Pilate himself, must answer. History asks the question; so does literature; so does art; so does philosophy; so does science; so does civilization; so does morality; so does conscience; so do I. As it was in the days of his flesh, so it is today; Jesus can in no wise be hid. What then will you do now with Jesus of Nazareth?

How long then, O friend, will you halt between two opinions in this stupendous matter? What will you do now with the Man of men? Do not answer as Pontius Pilate answered. Be true to your diviner instincts. Exclaim with Thomas,

MY LORD AND MY GOD!

THE INCIDENTAL CHRIST

(In a volume of selections from her husband's writings that Mrs. Boardman put out shortly after his death—"Life and Light"—she included a short essay, *The Incidental Christ*. It is so akin to "*The Problem of Jesus*," in theme and style, that it has seemed to us an appropriate addition to the longer dissertation, although never intended to be used as such.)

THE INCIDENTAL CHRIST

While there is but one divine Christ, there are two ways of conceiving of that one Christ, *i. e.*, an Incidental and an Essential.

The Incidental Christ is the outward Christ of circumstance; contingent; chronological; geographical; racial; hereditary; temperamental; educational; ecclesiastical; theological. This is the Christ of most biographers; the Christ of nationality,—the Christ of the Hebrew John, the Roman Paul, the Greek Athanasius, the Latin Augustine, the German Luther, the French Calvin, the Dutch Arminius, the Old England Spurgeon, the New England Bushnell, the Hindu Mozoomdar, the American Hodge.

In brief, this is the Christ of environment; of our own temperamental conception, our educational training, of our own

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desire; the Christ whom our own longings robe, vesture, image forth to consciousness.

But environments alter; incidentals are good as settings, but circumstances change; we ourselves change. The Essential Christ is the inward Christ who is therefore independent of circumstances, or conditions of time and space: the absolute, changeless, eternal, ever-contemporaneous, uncontingent Christ; the immortal Christ of character, the divine Christ of the Incarnation; that is, God's embodiment in the Son of Man. How often is this divine Christ obscured, hidden by environments and temporalities. We recognize Jesus the Man, but not Jesus the Christ. He stands among us, but "we know him not," except as casual, incidental.

He is in history; as center of chronology, migrations, institutions, legislations, progressions; yet to many historians he may be but a racial, geographical Christ.

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He is in philosophy; as center of nature, matter, law, order, cosmos; yet to some scientists he may be but a transient, phenomenal Christ.

He is in Christianity; as center of Gospels, Acts, Epistles, Covenant, Church; yet to some he may be but an ecclesiastical, theological Christ.

He is in art; as center of letters, poetry, essays, biographies, of music, painting, sculpture; yet to some artists he may be but a contingent local Christ.

He is in society; as center of mankind, of individuals, of outcasts, of monopolists; yet to some sociologists he may be but an incidental, temporal Christ.

Suppose we endeavor to translate the Christ of the past into the Christ of the present; the Christ of Palestine into the Christ of America; the Christ of the Hebrew into the Christ of the English; the Christ of idiom into the Christ of language; the Christ of theology into the Christ of ethics; the Christ of ritual into the Christ of practice; the Christ of par-

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able into the Christ of science; the Christ of letter into the Christ of spirit; the Christ of form into the Christ of life; the Christ of the church into the Christ of the kingdom; the Christ of yesterday into the Christ of today; the Christ of today into the Christ of tomorrow.

Do we not find the Essential Christ "the same yesterday, today, and forever"? Ever adjustable, because absolute; ever flexible, because changeless; the preterit and futurist of all existence.

Christ formed within us the crescent hope of character, becomes the life-element; the motive power, ever unfolding all incipient possibilities; ever developing all capacities; allowing for all personal equations; healing all discords; ennobling all weakness; transfiguring all errors.

Thus drawn by his graces into the sphere of his royal personality the visibles vanish, the invisibles emerge; the tangibles dissolve, the intangibles solidify; the vast dwindles, the small expands; the

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near recedes, the far approaches; and the dynamic force of an endless growth swells into the full-orbed glory of the Essential, Eternal Christ.